

**REMARKS**

Claim 1-5 are presently pending in the above-referenced application, and stand rejected pursuant to both 35 U.S.C. §112 and 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

As noted above, claims 1, 2 and 5 have been amended herein. In particular, both claims 1 and 2 have been amended (in response to the present rejection pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §112) to recite that polyethylene in layer A is a "polyethylene polymer," and claim 5 has been amended to eliminate its multiple dependency.

Claims 1 and 2 have been further amended to recite that the hydrogenated styrene/diene hydrocarbon copolymer in layer C is a random copolymer. No new matter is added by this amendment, support for which is provided, *inter alia*, within the text located between page 5, line 31 and page 6, line 4 of the application.

Additionally new claims 6-8 have been added herein. The content of these claims mirrors that of amended claim 5, except that each of claims 6-8 depends from a different claim than claim 5, which depends from claim 1. Specifically, new claim 6 depends from claim 2, new claim 7 depends from claim 3, and new claim 8 depends from claim 4. Because claims 6-8 mirror the content of claim 5, no new matter is added therein.

In view of the amendments set forth above and/or the remarks that follow, the pending rejections (discussed below) are overcome or rendered moot.

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Th §112 Rejection

Claims 1-5 are rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicants have amended claims 1 and 2 in accordance with the Examiner's suggested language, and have removed the multiple dependency of claim 5. Claims 1-8 are now believed to meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, and, therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

The Prior Art Rejection

The Examiner rejects claims 1-5 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable (i.e., obvious) over Japanese publication No. 07026212 A ("the '212 publication") either individually or in view of Japanese publication No. 11021519 A ("the 519 publication"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As indicated above, claim 1 of this application has been amended to recite that the hydrogenated styrene/diene hydrocarbon copolymer in layer C is a "hydrogenated styrene/diene hydrocarbon random copolymer." Applicants submit that there is no disclosure of suggestion in the '212 publication or the '519 publication (whether or not such publications are considered alone or in combination) of a pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet for surface protection that includes a layer that "contains a hydrogenated styrene/diene hydrocarbon random copolymer in an amount of at least 10 % by weight based on a total weight of the layer C," as recited in claim 1.

Instead, the '212 publication merely discloses a surface protective film that includes a "layer of a modified block copolymer formed by modifying a block copolymer of an A-B-A type and/or a block copolymer of an A-B type (wherein A is a styrenic polymer block; and B is an olefin polymer block formed by hydrogenating a butadiene polymer block) with an acid, and a self-adhesive layer".

Thus, the '212 publication contains no disclosure or suggestion of its block copolymer being a *random* copolymer.

Moreover, by virtue of being a *random* copolymer, the hydrogenated styrene/diene hydrocarbon random copolymer that is contained in layer C of the pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet recited in claim 1 of the present application is capable of forming an anchor coat *without necessitating* acid treatment/modification, which is a disadvantageous, yet necessary, preparation step in order to produce the modified block copolymer that is included in the surface protective film described in the '212 publication.

Further, the Examiner has not pointed to (not have Applicants located) any disclosure or suggestion in the '519 publication of a pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet for surface protection that includes a layer that "contains a hydrogenated styrene/diene hydrocarbon random copolymer in an amount of at least 10 % by weight based on a total weight of the layer C," as recited in claim 1.

Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 1 of the present application contains limitations that render this claim patentably distinct from the prior art, and, as such, further submit that claim 1 is allowable. Moreover, because each of claims 2-8 depends either directly or ultimately from allowable claim 1, these claims are allowable as well.

In view of the amendments and/or remarks presented above, claims 1-8 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-5, as well as consideration and allowance of claims 6-8 are respectfully requested.

If the undersigned can be of any assistance in advancing the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to contact him using the information listed below.

Date: August 23, 2002

Respectfully submitted,
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Version of amendments with markings to indicate additions and deletions

In the amendments, additions are underlined and deletions are bracketed.

In the Claims

Please amend claims 1, 2 and 5 as follows:

1. (Amended) A pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet for surface protection comprising a three-layered film in which a layer A, a layer B and a layer C have been laminated in this order and a pressure-sensitive adhesive layer on the layer C;
wherein the layer A contains a polyethylene polymer in an amount of at least 60 % by weight based on a total weight of the layer A;
the layer B contains a polypropylene polymer in an amount of at least 50 % by weight based on a total weight of the layer B; and
the layer C contains a hydrogenated styrene/diene hydrocarbon random copolymer in an amount of at least 10 % by weight [of] based on a total weight of the layer C.
2. (Amended) The pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet for surface protection according to Claim 1, wherein the layer C contains an ultraviolet stabilizer in an amount of not less than 0.1 part by weight per 100 parts by weight of the hydrogenated styrene/diene hydrocarbon random copolymer contained in the layer C and not more than 0.5 % by weight based on the total weight of the layer C.

5. (Amended) The pressure-sensitive adhesive sheet for surface protection according to [any of Claims 1 to 4] Claim 1, wherein the layer A contains an ultraviolet absorber in an amount of 0.05 to 0.5 % by weight based on the total weight of the layer A.